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Minutes, Arts & Sciences Professional Standards Committee Meeting, Tuesday, April 25, 2006

Arts & Sciences Professional Standards Committee

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Professional Standards Committee
Approved Minutes from April 25, 2006
12:30 pm Hauck 110

Next Meeting: Fall 2006 (time and place to be determined).

Introduction/Preliminaries

The meeting was convened at 12:30 pm in Hauck 110 by the chair, Nancy Decker. Faculty members present were: Gloria Cook, David Charles, Don Griffin, Steve Phelan, Maria Ruiz, and Paul Stephenson. Associate Dean Hoyt Edge was also present.

1. Agenda Items

I. Approval of minutes of March 28 & April 4, 2006

The minutes of the 3/28/06 and 4/4/06 meetings were approved as amended (typos corrected).

II. Firming up recommendations on faculty travel

III. Information from task force on Fall 2005 CIE

2. Old Business

Faculty Travel: N. Decker presented the new Faculty Travel guidelines to the PSC. The focus of the initial discussion was on point #4: "limit support of mere conference attendance (without presenting a paper or performance, responding to a paper, or speaker, serving on a panel, serving as an officer of the professional association) to 50% of actual costs."

N. Decker voiced her concern that this point was limiting to junior faculty.

M. Ruiz agreed, stating that new faculty may need new networking opportunities to take a new turn in their scholarship. She proposed that point #4 not apply to junior faculty during their first two years at Rollins.

D. Charles added that for faculty in scholarship fields such as his own, it is difficult to go to a conference in which one has a paper submitted and accepted for presentation.

D. Griffin added that if a faculty member is new, or not, if they are trying to get into a new field of scholarship-then he'd like to encourage that.

D. Charles concurred adding that especially with the new push towards interdisciplinarity, he was leery of language that was not nuanced.

D. Griffin suggested that we could put in language that would allow the Dean discretionary ability to decide.

D. Charles stated that he thought the two year limit for junior faculty was not appropriate.

N. Decker informed the PSC that her understanding was that the Dean is asking the PSC to give him guidelines to allow him to more readily manage these funds.

D. Griffin remarked that the PSC can give the Dean a list of categories but we want to make sure that faculty don't repeatedly attend conferences without presenting.

S. Phelan stated that he thought PSC was going about this the wrong way. He noted that when he teaches a class he spends a lot of time trying to reach the student that is least engaged. We need to look at faculty and make sure we are helping our less productive faculty. There is plenty of money for people who are doing things. It behooves us to have a program that helps people who are not doing something, to become more productive.

D. Griffin noted that PSC should be focusing on finding ways to help faculty who want to become more productive, and not rewarding those faculty who repeatedly go to conferences but don't do anything.

S. Phelan stated his concern that the college was repeatedly funding a limited number of faculty who get the most money every year, whereas the college should be committed to funding as many faculty as possible to encourage their participation in scholarly endeavors.

H. Edge replied that the practical concern was that we do not have enough money to fund all the requests. He asked if there were suggestions on how to deal with that.

S. Phelan replied that the President's International Initiative was a good model. We should be ensuring that funding exists for our entire faculty to attend at least one conference every three years.

D. Charles remarked that one of the things that brought him to Rollins in the first place was that all faculty were promised a certain amount of funds for travel.

D. Griffin stated that the college has been able to increase the travel money budget every year by increasing enrollment but that next year (2006/2007) we will not be able to do this.

S. Phelan remarked that a considerable number of conferences that he attends are interdisciplinary and at those conferences it is relatively unimportant if you present a paper. If you want an interdisciplinary faculty, you need to fund faculty to go these conferences. I trust the judgment of the Dean and I am not in favor of restrictions, and I am in favor of keeping a five year running history of those faculty who have not been participating to ensure that they get funded to attend a conference.

N. Decker asked, do you mean making a database so we can track travel?

G. Cook asked, do we already have such a database?

H. Edge replied that the college does not.

D. Griffin stated that he thought we should put limits on faculty spending but allow the Dean discretionary funds.

M. Ruiz asked if the college was likely to run out of travel expense funds next year; what would happen?

H. Edge replied that late applicants (those submitting intent to travel forms later than Jan 15) would not be allocated travel funds.

N. Decker noted that problems could be acute in the spring if travel funds run out before those who are planning a spring conference have chance to go.

N. Decker then asked, Do we, or do we not want to include point #4 ("limit support of mere conference attendance...to 50% of actual travel costs.") as it stands?

D. Charles proposed a compromise to point #4: If money is available, you could fund travel for such conferences on a graded scale.

S. Phelan added that he felt #4 should include a statement about taking into consideration the history of an applicant's attendance at meetings.

N. Decker proposed that it be amended with concern to faculty who are seeking to expand into a new field or do interdisciplinary work.

D. Charles suggested adding a narrative question to the intent to travel form. The question could ask applicants to provide a narrative explanation for why the faculty member wants to attend a particular conference.

D. Griffin stated that the PSC must become much tougher in approving proposals for grant funding, so that the Dean will have some discretionary funds available.

S. Phelan noted that it sometimes happens that it isn't until the middle of the year before you hear about a great conference, that you would like to attend. The college needs to be able to fund that.

N. Decker asked for clarification...So, Numbers 1-3 are hard and fast rules but #4 is used only if funds are limited?

H. Edge stated that there should be a strict adherence to the \$1200/\$1500 allotment for each faculty member.

M. Ruiz asked how much money has been spent during the 2005/2006 a.y. due to exceeding the 1200/1500 limit?

H. Edge responded that approximately \$10,000 dollars had been spent because of this.

N. Decker asked if faculty searches at conferences came out of the travel budget?

H. Edge responded that some of these travel expenses relate to faculty searches and some relate to accreditation.

N. Decker suggested adding point #5 that these travel funds not apply to people going to conferences for recruitment purposes.

H. Edge noted that the Human Resources office pays for recruitment trips.

N. Decker commented that she felt faculty would work within the framework that was given to them.

D. Charles suggested that a discretionary clause be added to #4 stating that anywhere from 40-80% of such travel expenses would be covered.

D. Griffin commented that everyone will request 80%

N. Decker suggested that a clause be added to #4 stating that faculty may apply for additional funding up to 80% based on benefit to the individual and to the college, depending on the discretion of the Dean.

S. Phelan asked if this policy would go to the faculty?

N. Decker replied that since this is not in the by-laws, the Executive Committee may simply pass this onto the Dean and not go for approval by the faculty.

3. New Business

The PSC discussed some of the concerns regarding review of the Technology Grants which were scheduled to be reviewed that evening.

CIE:

Statistical accuracy of the procedure and implications for FEC were not discussed due to time limitations.

4. Adjourn The meeting was adjourned (1:45 p.m.)

Respectfully submitted,
Paul Stephenson, Recording Secretary